

## XEROXED DATA LABELS<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** A rapid and economical method to produce permanent specimen labels utilizing Xerox is described.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Data storage, labels, museum techniques.

Most collectors now realize the importance of having complete and intelligible locality and biological data to accompany each specimen in a collection. The principle drawbacks for this ideal were once simply a matter of having too little time and space to write everything on a small label. Such problems were somewhat alleviated with the introduction of lithograph-offset and photographic labels. However, making these labels is also often time-consuming. With the offset method, a sheet of labels must be typed, and then sent to a printer to be transferred to a metal or paper master plate (Stuckenberg and Irvin, 1973). Adams (1962) has developed a rather rapid method by which limited numbers of labels can be printed. However, such labels are handwritten and the amount of data which can be put on a small label is severely limited.

Xeroxed labels have been used by some collectors with considerable success. The advantages of these labels are great – the print (baked-in carbon) will not run in alcohol and is unlikely to fade with time. High quality rag paper which will not easily yellow can be used for the labels. Most importantly, these labels can be made extremely fast and at very low cost if a Xerox machine is readily available. A method I have used to produce high quality labels quickly and economically is described here.

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The desired labels are first typed. Paper with a smooth glossy finish should be used, as it seems to Xerox the best. A horizontal row of labels is typed and recorded on an IBM MT/ST or other automatic typewriter. The machine then automatically copies this row over and over until stopped, or until the end of the page is reached. If such a machine is not available, an electric typewriter with a plastic carbon ribbon should be used. Manual typewriters do not produce the required sharp print.

The finished sheets of typed labels are next copied, using the Xerox 7000 copier. This machine contains a reducing feature which will reduce two printed pages to the size of one. First, I reduce all the typewritten pages to this reduced size. Then I take these half-size sheets and reduce them again, so that the printing is now approximately one-quarter of the original size. The finished quarter-size print sheets can be used as masters for making the actual labels. It should be mentioned that the "Light Original" feature is always used when copying in order to produce the darkest image possible.

The actual labels can be made on almost any copying machine. The quarter-size print sheet serves as the master, and labels are copied directly from this onto high quality rag paper. The finished label (4 rows) measures approximately 10 mm x 15 mm.

The cost for these labels in terms of both material and labor is small. Most of the actual time spent preparing these labels comes from typing them up. Xerox costs range from 3-5 cents per page and one page can contain hundreds of labels. It is also advantageous to note that there are no negatives or etched plates to keep track of, as with other methods. Only the master sheets need be retained if more labels are to be printed at a later date.

#### LITERATURE CITED

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Stuckenberg, B.R. and M.E. Irwin. 1973. Standards for Entomological Labels. *Bull. Ent. Soc. Amer.* 19(3):164-168.